



Illustration by Charles Feddema;
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Rocky Mountains and Colorado Basin'

CAREX PARRYANA SSP IDAHOA **IDAHO SEDGE**

Idaho Sedge is a grass-like perennial with stems 20-35 cm high in small clumps and arising from short rhizomes. Leaves are flat, 2-4 mm wide, and crowded near the base. Flowers are clustered in usually 3 oblong-cylindrical spikes 1-3 cm long, with the uppermost being larger than the others. Male flowers are absent or scattered among the perigynia on the largest spike. The spikes form a narrow, interrupted head, subtended by small leaf-like bracts, at the top of the stems. The narrowly oval scales subtending each perigynium taper to the tip and are 2-3 times longer than the perigynia. These scales are brown with membranous margins and a distinct pale center. Glabrous, egg-shaped perigynia are yellow-green and ca. 3 mm long with a short beak. Each perigynium has 3 stigmas and an achene that is 3-sided. Fruit mature in July-August.

The large terminal spike and the long, female scales that are at least twice as long as the perigynia distinguish it from the more common *CAREX PARRYANA SSP PARRYANA*. A hand lens or microscope and technical key are needed for positive identification.